

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-33 (canceled).

Claim 34 (currently amended): ~~The system of claim 33, further comprising:~~ A software pay-per-use (PPU) system comprising:

a first computer having one or more PPU software products;

a metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products, wherein each metrics gathering tool monitors and measures usage data for its associated one or more PPU software products;

a software metering agent residing on the first computer, wherein the software metering agent collects the measured usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with the one or more PPU software products and collects usage data for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer;

a utility metering appliance connected to a plurality of computers, including the first computer, through a network, wherein the utility metering appliance receives the collected usage data from the software metering agent residing on the first computer and other software metering agents residing on other computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network;

a usage collection and billing system, wherein the usage collection and billing system periodically receives the collected usage data from the utility metering appliance and processes the collected usage data to generate billing information for PPU software products on the plurality of computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network;
and

a registry for identifying all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer, wherein the registry includes identifiers for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer and a pathname for each software metering agent associated with each of the one or more PPU software products.

Claim 35 (currently amended): The system of claim ~~34~~ 33, wherein the software metering agent reads the pathname in the registry to access the associated metrics gathering tool and collect the measured usage data.

Claim 36-37 (cancelled).

Claim 38 (currently amended): ~~The system of claim 37,~~ A software pay-per-use (PPU) system comprising:

a first computer having one or more PPU software products;

a metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products, wherein each metrics gathering tool monitors and measures usage data for its associated one or more PPU software products;

a software metering agent residing on the first computer, wherein the software metering agent collects the measured usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with the one or more PPU software products and collects usage data for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer;

a utility metering appliance connected to a plurality of computers, including the first computer, through a network, wherein the utility metering appliance receives the collected usage data from the software metering agent residing on the first computer and other software metering agents residing on other computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network, wherein the utility metering appliance is located on a standalone computer on the network, and wherein the utility metering appliance is a software program residing on each of the plurality of computers; and

a usage collection and billing system, wherein the usage collection and billing system periodically receives the collected usage data from the utility metering appliance and processes the collected usage data to generate billing information for PPU software products on the plurality of computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network.

Claim 39-44 (cancelled).

Claim 45 (currently amended): ~~The system of claim 33,~~ A software pay-per-use (PPU) system comprising:

a first computer having one or more PPU software products;

a metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products, wherein each metrics gathering tool monitors and measures usage data for its associated one or more PPU software products, wherein the usage data includes a number of input/output (I/O) transactions processed in a given time period;

a software metering agent residing on the first computer, wherein the software metering agent collects the measured usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with the one or more PPU software products and collects usage data for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer;

a utility metering appliance connected to a plurality of computers, including the first computer, through a network, wherein the utility metering appliance receives the collected usage data from the software metering agent residing on the first computer and other software metering agents residing on other computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network; and

a usage collection and billing system, wherein the usage collection and billing system periodically receives the collected usage data from the utility metering appliance and processes the collected usage data to generate billing information for PPU software products on the plurality of computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network.

Claim 46 (currently amended): ~~The system of claim 33,~~ A software pay-per-use (PPU) system comprising:

a first computer having one or more PPU software products;

a metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products, wherein each metrics gathering tool monitors and measures usage data for its associated one or more PPU software products, wherein the usage data associated with the one or more of the PPU software products is based on one or more of the following: number of users of the system, number of users of a given type, software license level, number of transactions processed per minute, total number of transactions processed, number of files created, sizes of files created, number of keystrokes processed, number of times a specific software product feature has been accessed and number of computers on the system using one or more of the PPU software products;

a software metering agent residing on the first computer, wherein the software metering agent collects the measured usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with the one or more PPU software products and collects usage data for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer;

a utility metering appliance connected to a plurality of computers, including the first computer, through a network, wherein the utility metering appliance receives the collected usage data from the software metering agent residing on the first computer and other software metering agents residing on other computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network; and

a usage collection and billing system, wherein the usage collection and billing system periodically receives the collected usage data from the utility metering appliance and processes the collected usage data to generate billing information for PPU software products on the plurality of computers connected to the utility metering appliance through the network.

Claim 47-52 (cancelled).

Claim 53 (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 52, further comprising:~~ A computer implemented method for generating a bill for using a pay-per-use (PPU) software product, the method comprising:

measuring usage data associated with one or more PPU software products using a metrics gathering tool at a first computer having one or more PPU software products, wherein one metrics gathering tool is associated with each of the one or more PPU software products;

collecting the measured usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products using a software metering agent, wherein the software metering agent collects usage data for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer;

receiving the collected usage data from the software metering agent residing on the first computer and from a plurality of other software metering agents residing on a plurality of computers, wherein the collected usage data is collected at a utility metering appliance connected to the plurality of computers, including the first computer, through a network;

processing the collected usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products on the first computer received from the utility metering appliance;

generating the bill for using the one or more PPU software products on the first computer based on the processed collected usage data from the first computer; and

identifying all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer by a registry, wherein the registry includes identifiers for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent

on the first computer and a pathname for each software metering agent associated with each of the one or more PPU software products.

Claim 54 (previously presented): The method of claim 53, further comprising:

reading the pathname in the registry to access the metrics gathering tool associated with the PPU software product; and

collecting the measured usage data associated with the PPU software product.

Claim 55-59 (cancelled).

Claim 60 (currently amended): ~~The computer-readable storage medium of claim 59, further comprising:~~ A computer readable storage medium containing instructions for generating a bill for using a pay-per-use (PPU) software product, by:

measuring usage data associated with one or more PPU software products using a metrics gathering tool at a first computer having one or more PPU software products, wherein one metrics gathering tool is associated with each of the one or more PPU software products;

collecting the measured usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products using a software metering agent, wherein the software metering agent collects usage data for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer;

receiving the collected usage data from the software metering agent residing on the first computer and from a plurality of other software metering agents residing on a plurality of computers, wherein the collected usage data is collected at a utility metering appliance connected to the plurality of computers, including the first computer, through a network;

processing the collected usage data from each metrics gathering tool associated with each of the one or more PPU software products on the first computer received from the utility metering appliance;

generating the bill for using the one or more PPU software products on the first computer based on the processed collected usage data from the first computer; and

identifying all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer by a registry, wherein the registry includes identifiers for all of the one or more PPU software products registered with the software metering agent on the first computer and a pathname for each software metering agent associated with each of the one or more PPU software products.

Claim 61 (previously presented): The computer readable storage medium of claim 60, further comprising:

reading the pathname in the registry to access the metrics gathering tool associated with the PPU software product; and

collecting the measured usage data associated with the PPU software product.

Claim 62-65 (cancelled).